

Annex D
April 15, 1958 *wpc*

Restrictions on Public Access to
OSS Records in the Custody of the National Archives

A. Records Transferred by the State Department

Seven of the eight accessions of records of the OSS Research and Analysis Branch are restricted as follows, according to the following restriction imposed by the Secretary of State and approved by the National Archives on March 2, 1948: "Unless express permission is obtained from the Department of State, these records shall be kept confidential and shall be withheld from examination and consultation by officials, private individuals, or any other persons." From time to time selected items from these files have actually been opened for use, on specific requests approved by the State Department, so the CIA Records Management Staff has been told by the National Archives.

The eighth State-controlled accession contains certain OSS "topographic maps of Europe, with annotations, showing plans for commando and other operations, 1943-45 (13 maps)." For unexplained reasons, no restriction is specifically imposed on this apparently sensitive file, either in the restriction-policy statement published by the National Archives (quoted in the preceding paragraph), nor in the published "Guide to the Records in the National Archives" (1948 ed.), p. 610. Despite this omission, this map file is doubtless handled under the same blanket State Department restriction cited above.

This document has been approved for release through the HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM of the Central Intelligence Agency.

Date 1/28/91

HRP 89-2

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B. Records Transferred by SSU (CIG or CIA)

No restrictions were imposed at the time of transfer, either on the five OSS motion pictures (transferred by SSU in 1946) or on the records of the OSS Pictorial Records Section (transferred by CIA in 1948); see "job" folders relating to these two accessions, on file in the National Archives. Nor did the "restriction" policy on OSS records, published by the National Archives in 1948, specifically restrict these two files. The five motion pictures are, in fact, unclassified. In practice, however, all inquiries on these records are referred to CIA for decision.

The property records of OSS field installations (transferred by CIG in 1947) were to be "restricted to use by CIG personnel," so Colonel 25X1A [REDACTED] SSU/CIG, wrote to the National Archives on April 10, 1947; see his letter, in "job" folder on this accession, on file in the National Archives. The restriction policy statement, as published by the National Archives in March 1948, reads slightly differently: "Use of these records is restricted to agencies of the Government and to persons authorized to use them by the Central Intelligence Agency." In practice, any inquiries about these records would be referred directly and solely to CIA for decision, so it is understood by the CIA Records Management Staff. Up to the present time, there have been no public inquiries about this file at the National Archives.